

IN THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A process for preparing an antimicrobial polymer, said process comprising:

polymerizing one or more aliphatically unsaturated monomers, said one or more aliphatically unsaturated monomers at least singly functionalized by means of a tertiary amino group.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): The process ~~as claimed in claim~~ of Claim 1, wherein the one or more aliphatically unsaturated monomers are functionalized by means of a tertiary amino group of the formula:



where R_1 is a branched, unbranched or cyclic, saturated or unsaturated hydrocarbon radical having up to 50 carbon atoms which may have substitution by O atoms, N atoms or atoms, and

R_2 and R_3 are identical or different and are branched, unbranched or cyclic, saturated or unsaturated hydrocarbon radicals having up to 25 carbon atoms, which may have substitution by O atoms, N atoms or S atoms.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): The process ~~as claimed in~~ of Claim 1, wherein the one or more aliphatically unsaturated monomers is polymerized with one or more second aliphatically unsaturated monomers selected from the group consisting of acrylates and methacrylates.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): The process ~~as claimed in~~ of Claim 1, wherein the monomers are polymerized on a substrate.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): The process ~~as claimed in~~ of Claim 1, wherein the monomers are graft polymerized onto a substrate.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): The process ~~as claimed in~~ of ~~claim~~ Claim 5, wherein the substrate is activated prior to graft polymerization by UV radiation, plasma treatment, corona treatment, flame treatment, ozonization, electrical discharge or γ -radiation.

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): The process ~~as claimed in~~ of ~~claim~~ Claim 5, wherein the substrate is activated prior to graft polymerization by UV radiation with a photosensitizer.

Claims 8-11 (Canceled).

Claim 12 (Currently Amended): The process ~~as claimed in~~ of Claim 3, wherein the acrylates and methacrylates are selected from the group consisting of acrylic acid, tert-butyl methacrylate, methyl methacrylate, styrene, vinyl chloride, vinyl ethers, acrylamides, acrylonitriles, allyl compounds, vinyl ketones, vinylacetic acid, vinyl acetates and vinyl esters.

Claim 13 (Previously Presented): An article of manufacture comprising an antimicrobial coating, said antimicrobial coating comprising a polymer prepared by the process ~~as claimed in~~ of Claim 1.

Claim 14 (Currently Amended): A medical device comprising an antimicrobial coating, said antimicrobial coating comprising an antimicrobial polymer prepared by the process ~~as claimed in~~ of Claim 1.

Claim 15 (Currently Amended): A hygiene item comprising an antimicrobial coating, said antimicrobial coating comprising an antimicrobial polymer prepared by the process as ~~claimed in~~ of Claim 1.

Claim 16 (Currently Amended): A ~~surface coating, protective paint or other coating or paint~~ comprising an antimicrobial polymer prepared by the process ~~as claimed in~~ of Claim 1.